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WRITER DISCUSSES PROBLEMS OF PRC GANDA AT POLAND'S NINTH PLENUM

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It seems to me that at today's Plenum, and at many of our previous Plenums, there were some matters which were almost completely ignored. One of these is propaganda. What is said is very important, but how it is said is also important. Propaganda is essentially a method of presenting the true political situation in the most correct and effective manner. Does our propaganda always do this? I think not. I think that our propaganda, in spite of many successes, still has many important shortcomings.

I personally believe that our press does not give enough news coverage, especially foreign news. Foreign news takes up much less space in our press than, for instance, in *Pravda*, where 30 to 40 percent of the space is devoted to foreign news. Of course our reader is subjected to more hostile radio propaganda than the Soviet reader.

How should we counteract this hostile propaganda? By giving the true news about what is happening abroad. The truth about the capitalist world is such that, if we knew how to choose the news, it would speak more strongly for our system than the often weak commentaries of our publicists. However, we give too little emphasis to this kind of news. This is, in my estimation, the weak side in our information program. It seems to me that we should give more consideration to this problem.

There is still another problem in propaganda. Our press has had a whole series of successes. We have such papers as *Trybuna Robotnicza* and *Zycie Warszawy*, which are generally very fine newspapers. Our press, however, is making a very serious error. Too frequently, it beats an enthusiastic refrain, thinking that in this way it will arouse enthusiasm in the reader.

With reference to our Plenum, propaganda has its own particular significance. Comrade Minc mentioned a very important matter: that the resolutions of the Plenum will correct the situation and the standard of living of our peoples; but he emphasized that this will occur only through our efforts, and that it will not come about merely by decree. We will have to work vigorously at this. I am afraid that our press, accustomed to shallow enthusiasm, will overlook the current urgency of our efforts.

Let us recall the Soviet press in the first and second Five-Year Plans. The press was not afraid to enumerate the difficulties. Its only concern was to show them in such a way that the reader would see them in proper perspective and try to overcome those difficulties in order to bring about achievements. This is the method by which creative enthusiasm can be aroused.

There is insufficient criticism in our press in connection with propaganda, and our criticism is usually confined to complaints. This is necessary but our criticism should not stop here. Have we actually absorbed all the wisdom in the world? Have we a definite opinion about everything and know what to follow? Every-day life presents problems which need to be discussed. Such discussions and collective opinions on particular topics are scarce in our press.

Another subject for propaganda is the struggle to raise our standard of living, not only by shifts in investments but by the mobilization of untapped

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resources. One is by cutting out unnecessary expenses. Do we not have anything to say on this matter? It would be worth investigating whether the number of positions and offices which we set up is not excessive.

The last topic about which I want to speak is culture. The raising of our standard of living must also include concern for raising the culture of our nation. In the past few years, we have taken great strides toward this objective. In 1951, the sum total of books published in the Polish language reached 100 million copies. This is a fantastic number and is evidence of the enormous effort made by our state in promoting culture. The books are not only published, but sold and read. Polish classics and Soviet books are disseminated in enormous quantities. Some contemporary Polish works are very readable. However, in the area of cultural creativeness, we are weak.

We must resolve in what way the party and the state can help the musician, the painter, and the writer to produce something of value. Obviously, we must assure them suitable material conditions and ideological help. Of course, it is not enough to commission someone to write a fine novel. We can exclude poor cultural production from publication but we cannot command the creation of fine work. We must create the material and moral conditions under which authors can produce their best.

There have been gathering in Poland many doubts of an ideological nature. We do not understand how to apply to our conditions the theories proclaimed recently in the Soviet Union, where, since last year, very interesting discussion persists on the subject of the absence of conflict as a main cause of hindrance in certain areas of Soviet art. I fear that this concept of an absence of conflict also exists here. We are trying to cope with it here and there, but these are complicated matters. In my estimation, the wrong concept of the absence of conflict is an obstacle in cultural activities; it arises from the wrong treatment of the essence of conflict in our society.

I do not intend to divert today's Plenum discussion to the topic of culture. However, I would like to end with a very concrete organizational proposal to the leadership of the party. It would be worthwhile to assemble a small group of activists to discuss a number of ideological doubts which prevail among us in cultural activities and which, in my estimation, hinder cultural activity. In this connection, let us set a date for the discussion some time before the Congress so that we can come to the Congress with a defined position.

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